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CAN. $1.35
U.K. 50p
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SPIRAL ZONE™
THE FINAL BATTLE!

EVEN AS YOU READ THESE WORDS, THE FREEDOM OF MANKIND IS IN DIRE PERIL!
HAVING TREACHEROUSLY SEIZED CONTROL OF MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL'S STATE-OF-THE-ART ALBATROSS SPY SATELLITE--
--THE POWER-MAD VILLAIN KNOWN AS OVERLORD IS NOW USING IT TO LINK UP HIS GIANT ZONE GENERATORS INTO A MAMMOTH ZONAL GRID WHICH THREATENS, IN A MATTER OF HOURS, TO EXTEND HIS DREADED SPIRAL ZONE OVER THE ENTIRE EARTH!
SPIRAL Zone
HAVE THE VALIANT ZONE RIDERS MET THEIR MOST CATASTROPHIC DEFEAT? THE WORLD MIGHT YET WITNESS--
THE TRIUMPH OF OVERLORD
MICHAEL FLEISHER story
CARMINE INFANTINO layouts
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DICK GIORDANO inks
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HELEN VESIK coloring
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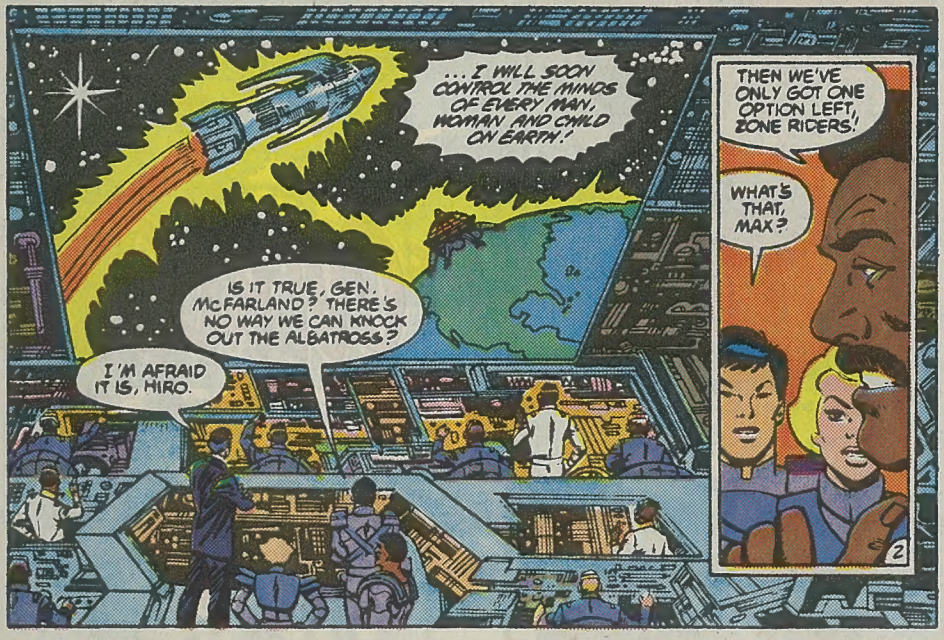
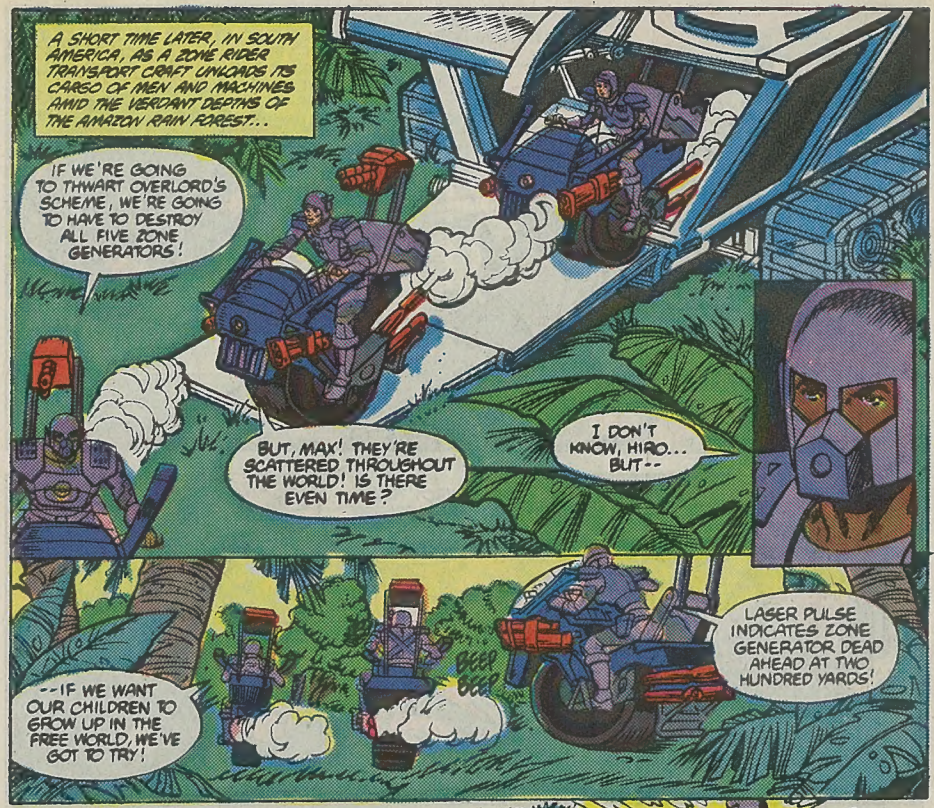
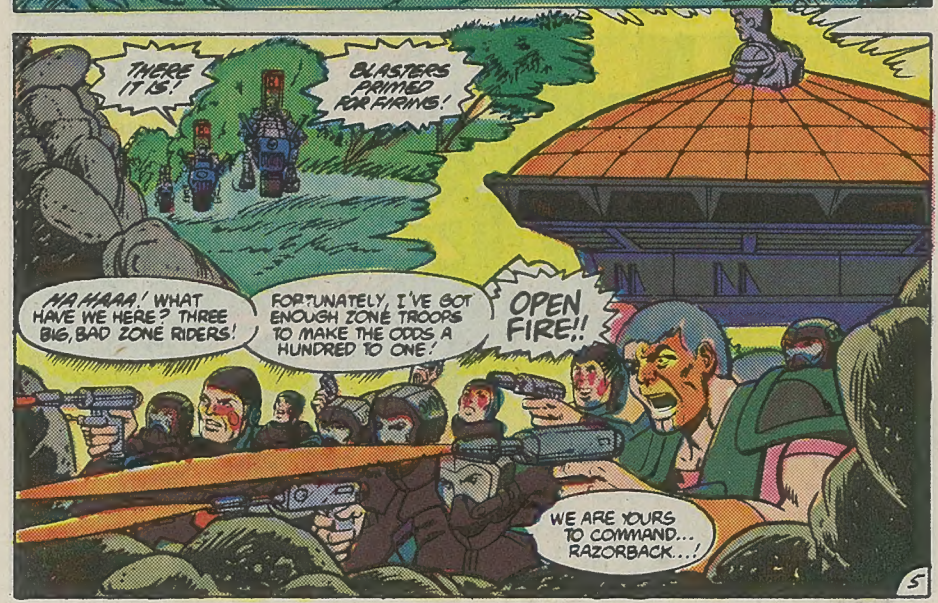
AHA HAAA! FACE REALITY, ZONE RIDERS! YOU'VE LOST! THE ALBATROSS IS MINE NOW...
...AND THE VERY FORCE SHIELD WHICH YOU DEVISED TO SAFE-GUARD HER AGAINST MY WEAPONS MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DESTROY HER!
AS FOR YOUR BELOVED COMMANDER DIRK COURAGE, THE CHARRED DEBRIS OF HIS AIRCRAFT LIE SCATTERED ACROSS A REMOTE MOUNTAIN-SIDE IN A MANGLED HEAP!
YOUR CAUSE IS LOST!


...I WILL SOON CONTROL THE MINDS OF EVERY MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD ON EARTH!
IS IT TRUE, GEN. MCFARLAND? THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN KNOCK OUT THE ALBATROSS?
I'M AFRAID IT IS, HIRO.
THEN WE'VE ONLY GOT ONE OPTION LEFT, ZONE RIDERS!
WHAT'S THAT, MAX?
2

WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FORGET ABOUT THE ALBATROSS--AND BLAST APART OVERLORD'S FIVE GIANT ZONE GENERATORS ONE BY ONE!
WISH US LUCK, GENERAL!
THE FATE OF THE EARTH IS IN YOUR HANDS, ZONE RIDERS!
MAY HEAVEN PROTECT YOU!
BUT AT THAT MOMENT, ON THE RUGGED MOUNTAINSIDE LITTERED WITH THE STILL-SMOKING REMAINS OF COMMANDER DIRK COMBASE'S AIRCRAFT...
WHEW! THAT MUSTA BEEN ONE HECKUVA CRASH!
THE TREMORS FROM IT ALONE SEEMED 'BOUT TO BRING THAT OLD SHACK OF MINE CRUMBLING DOWN AROUND MY EARS!
WHA--!? LOOKS LIKE ONE'A THEM HIGH-TECH FIGHTERS I'VE HEARD THE ZONE RIDERS USE!
I SURE WISH UNCLE HO HADN'T BLOWN OFF THIS RIGHT LEG'O'MINE IN THE 'NAM THIRTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO!
IT'D SURE MAKE IT A WHOLE LOT EASIER TO--
HUNH--!? THAT MOANIN' SOUND! SOUNDED ALMOST HUMAN!
3

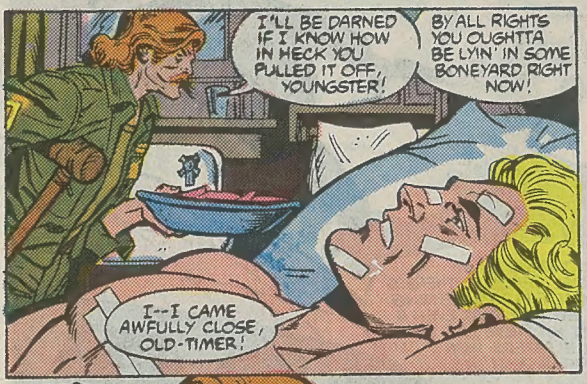
NAW, MUSTA JUST BEEN THE MOUNTAIN WIND WHISTLIN' THROUGH THE WRECK, THAT'S ALL!
AIN'T NO TOP GUN ALIVE COULDA SURVIVED THIS SMASH-UP!
REMINDS ME OF THAT 'COPTER I CRACKED UP IN THE MEKONG!
MY BEST BUDDY BOUGHT THE FARM SOON'S SHE HIT! I MADE IT INTO THE JUNGLE...
...GOT MY GOOD RIGHT LEG BLOWED OFF BY A MINE!
I DESPISE WAR! ANY WAR! WHICH IS WHY I MOVED ALL THE WAY UP HERE, FAR FROM--
UUUUH.
HUH--!?
HOLY SMOKES! IT WASN'T THE WIND! IT'S A FLYBOY!
AN'--AN' HE'S STILL BREATHIN'!


A SHORT TIME LATER, IN SOUTH AMERICA, AS A ZONE RIDER TRANSPORT CRAFT UNLOADS ITS CARGO OF MEN AND MACHINES AMID THE VERDANT DEPTHS OF THE AMAZON RAIN FOREST...
IF WE'RE GOING TO THWART OVERLORD'S SCHEME, WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DESTROY ALL FIVE ZONE GENERATORS!
BUT, MAX! THEY'RE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD! IS THERE EVEN TIME?
I DON'T KNOW, HIRO... BUT--
--IF WE WANT OUR CHILDREN TO GROW UP IN THE FREE WORLD, WE'VE GOT TO TRY!
LASER PULSE INDICATES ZONE GENERATOR DEAD AHEAD AT TWO HUNDRED YARDS!

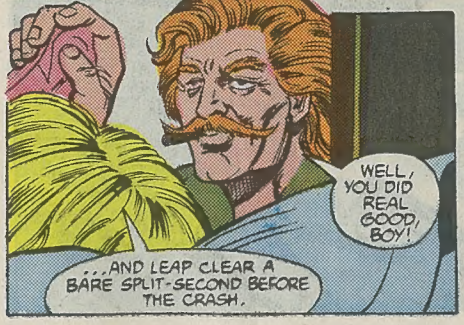

THERE IT IS!
BLASTERS PRIMED FOR FIRING!
HA,HAAA! WHAT HAVE WE HERE? THREE BIG, BAD ZONE RIDERS!
FORTUNATELY, I'VE GOT ENOUGH ZONE TROOPS TO MAKE THE ODDS A HUNDRED TO ONE!
OPEN FIRE!!
WE ARE YOURS TO COMMAND... RAZORBACK...!

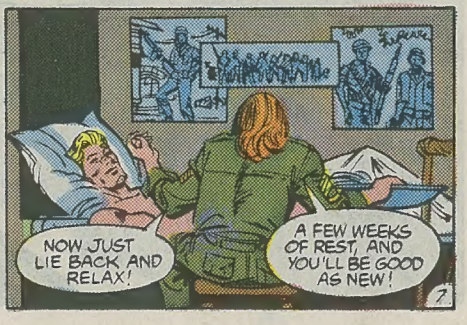
THEY WERE WAITING FOR US!
OVERLORD MUST HAVE FOUND THE TRANSPORT VIA SATELLITE RADAR AND WARNED THEM WE WERE COMING!
THEY'RE POURING OUT A LOT OF HEAVY FIREPOWER, MAX!
WE'LL NEVER REACH THE ZONE GENERATOR BEFORE THEY BLOW US APART!
I'M WITH HIRO! THERE ARE MORE OF THEM THAN WE CAN HANDLE!
YOU GUYS KNOW I DON'T LIKE SAYING THIS--
--BUT UNLESS WE'RE IN THE MOOD TO COMMIT SUICIDE, THE ONLY OPTION WE'VE GOT LEFT IS A FULL-SCALE RETREAT!
RETREAT? GOOD LORD!
DOES THAT MEAN THE EARTH IS DOOMED?
6

HA HOHA HAHOHAHA
WHAT GREAT FUN IT IS WATCHING THE ZONE RIDERS RUN FOR THEIR LIVES!
WITHOUT DIRK COURAGE TO LEAD THEM, THE ZONE RIDERS ARE HELPLESS!
AND COURAGE IS DEAD, SCATTERED IN BITS AND PIECES ALL OVER THE MOUNTAINSIDE!
DON'T BE TOO SURE OF THAT, OVERLORD! FOR AT THIS VERY MOMENT...

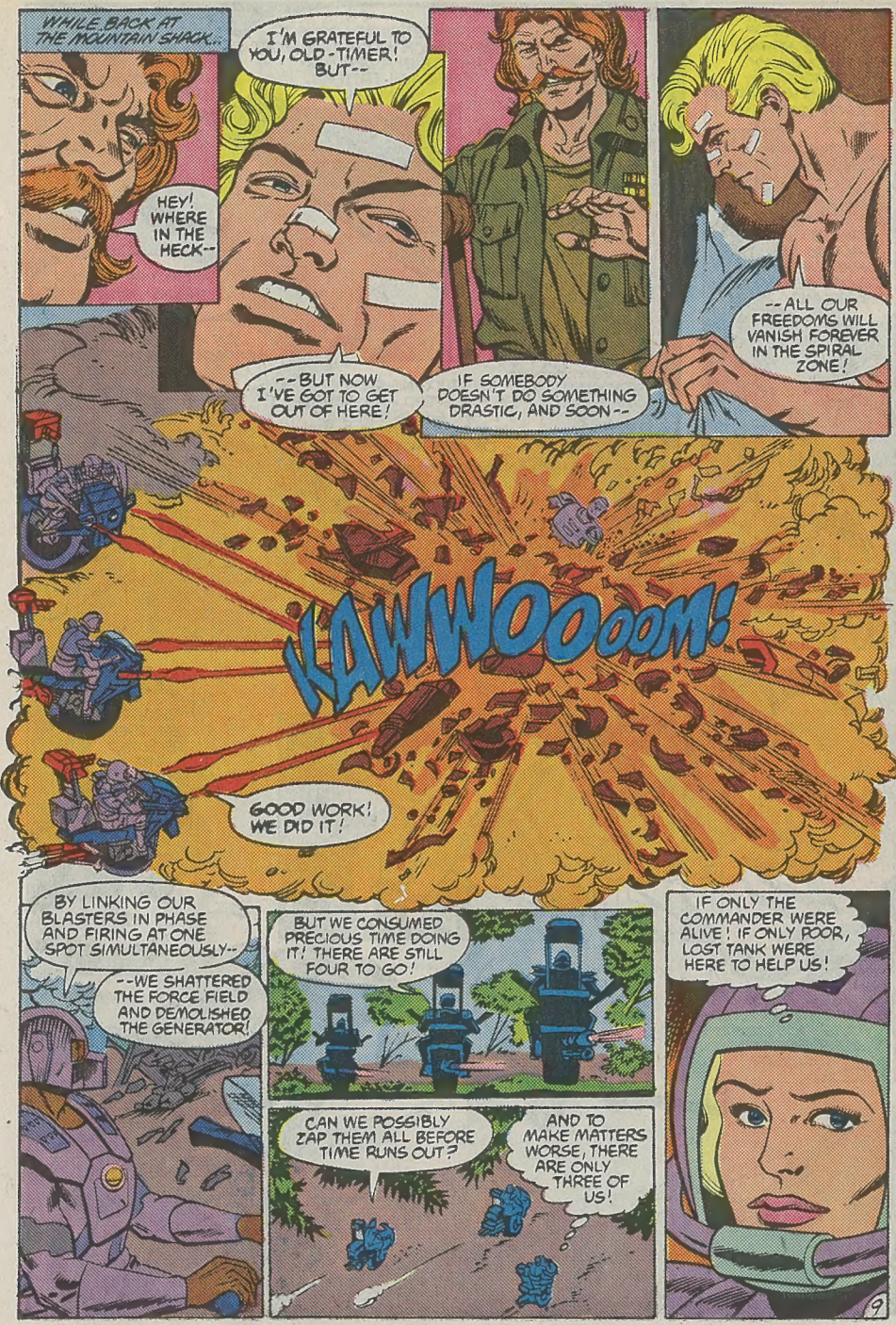

I'LL BE DARNED IF I KNOW HOW IN HECK YOU PULLED IT OFF, YOUNGSTER!
BY ALL RIGHTS YOU OUGHTTA BE LYIN' IN SOME BONEYARD RIGHT NOW!
I--I CAME AWFULLY CLOSE, OLD-TIMER!

OVERLORD SABOTAGED MY CONTROLS--EVEN SHORTED OUT THE ELEC-TRONIC EJECTION TAB!
I HAD TO UNBOLT THE CANOPY BY HAND..

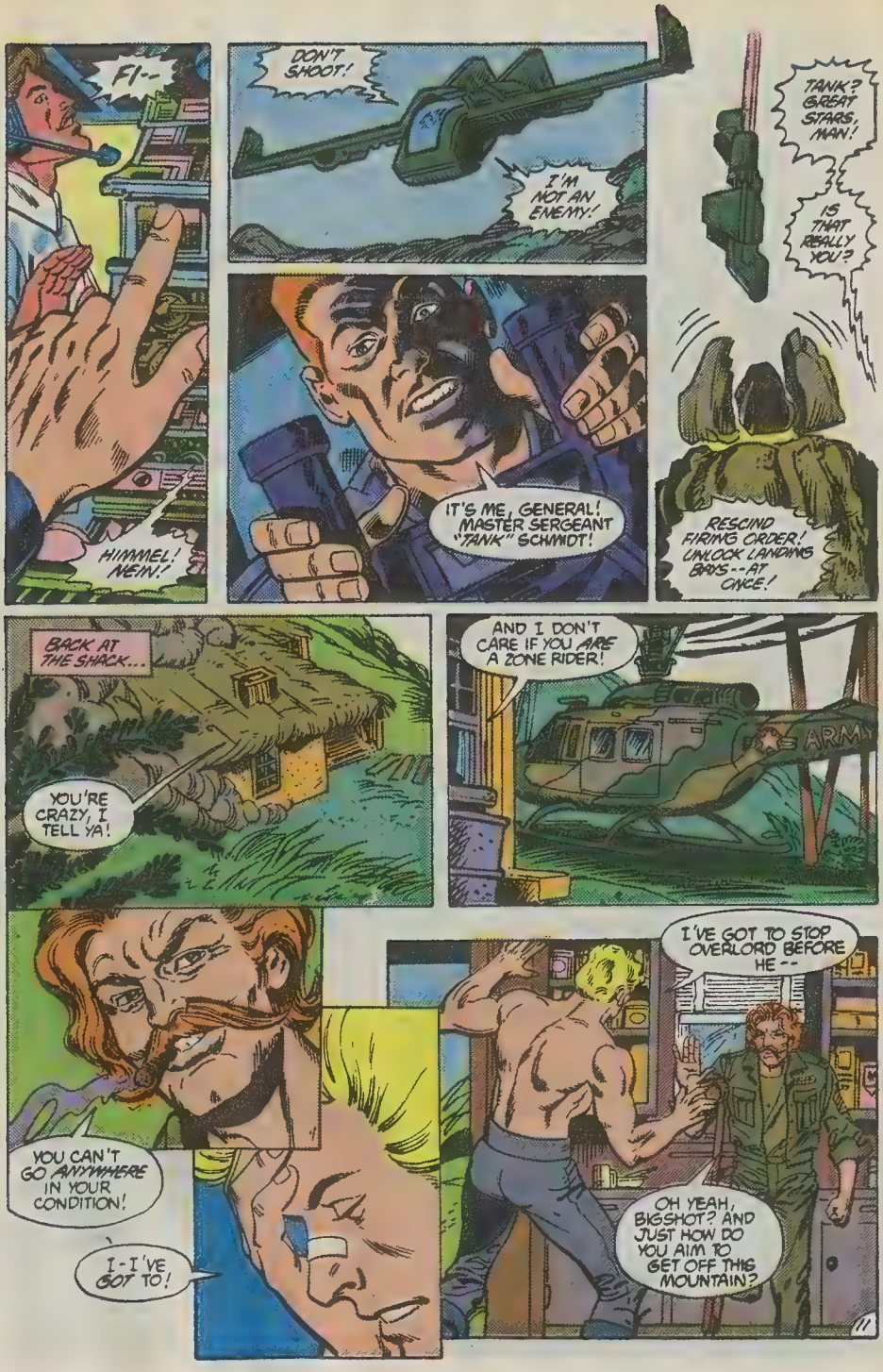

WELL, YOU DID REAL GOOD, BOY!
...AND LEAP CLEAR A BARE SPLIT-SECOND BEFORE THE CRASH.

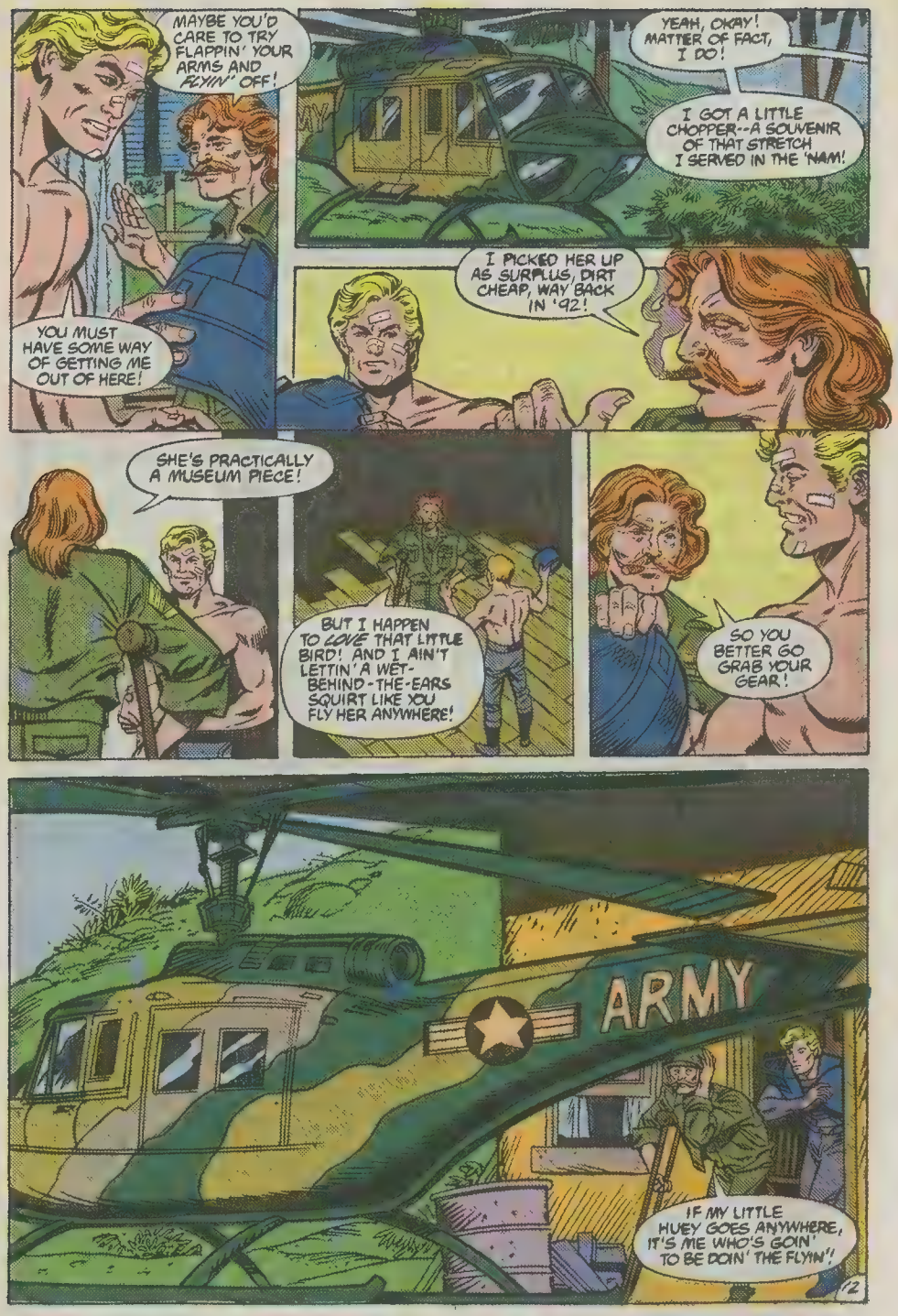

NOW JUST LIE BACK AND RELAX!
A FEW WEEKS OF REST, AND YOU'LL BE GOOD AS NEW!

MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE AMAZON...
YOU ACTUALLY HAD ME BELIEVING THAT RETREAT STUFF, YOU KNOW THAT, MAX?
THEY HAD US OUTGUNNED, HIRO! WE HAD NO REAL CHOICE BUT TO TAKE THEM BY SURPRISE!
BY CONCENTRATING OUR FIREPOWER TO CREATE A BREACH IN THEIR WALL, WE OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO BREAK THROUGH TO THE ZONE GENERATOR WITHOUT DOING ANYONE ANY HARM!
RUN!!
AIIIEEEE!
UH-OH! TROUBLE!
ACCORDING TO MY THERMAL READOUT, THERE'S A FORCE FIELD PROTECTING THAT SUCKER THAT EVEN A DIRECT HIT FROM ONE OF OUR BLASTERS WON'T MAKE A DENT IN!


WHILE BACK AT THE MOUNTAIN SHACK...
HEY! WHERE IN THE HECK--
I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU, OLD-TIMER! BUT--
--BUT NOW I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
IF SOMEBODY DOESN'T DO SOMETHING DRASTIC, AND SOON--
--ALL OUR FREEDOMS WILL VANISH FOREVER IN THE SPIRAL ZONE!
KAWOOOOM!
GOOD WORK! WE DID IT!
BY LINKING OUR BLASTERS IN PHASE AND FIRING AT ONE SPOT SIMULTANEOUSLY--
--WE SHATTERED THE FORCE FIELD AND DEMOLISHED THE GENERATOR!
BUT WE CONSUMED PRECIOUS TIME DOING IT! THERE ARE STILL FOUR TO GO!
CAN WE POSSIBLY ZAP THEM ALL BEFORE TIME RUNS OUT?
AND TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THERE ARE ONLY THREE OF US!
IF ONLY THE COMMANDER WERE ALIVE! IF ONLY POOR, LOST TANK WERE HERE TO HELP US!

MANY MILES AWAY, MEANTIME, DEEP WITHIN THE HEAVILY FORTIFIED ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEAD-QUARTERS KNOWN AS MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL...
THIS IS AERIAL SURVEILLANCE CALLING GEN. McFARLAND!
WE SIGHTED WHAT LOOKS TO BE A BLACK WIDOW TRANSPORT SHUTTLE IN A DEAD-ON APPROACH PATTERN, GENERAL!
I KNOW THIS MAY SOUND CRAZY, SIR--
--BUT JUDGING FROM HER AIR SPEED AND ALTITUDE, I'D SAY SHE INTENDS TO HAZARD A LANDING RIGHT ON OUR MOUNTAINTOP!
A LANDING?!? DOES OVERLORD THINK WE'RE STUPID?
IT'S A SNEAK ATTACK OF SOME KIND! IT'S GOT TO BE!
BLAST IT, MAN! IT MAY BE CARRYING A BOMB! YOU MUSTN'T LET IT GET ANY CLOSER!
YOU HEARD THE GENERAL! DEPLOY LASER ANTIAIRCRAFT BATTERY ON MY MARK!
LASER BATTERY DEPLOYED AND TARGETED!
FIRE ON MY MARK!
READY...
AIM...


FI--
HIMMEL! NEIN!
DON'T SHOOT!
I'M NOT AN ENEMY!
IT'S ME, GENERAL! MASTER SERGEANT "TANK" SCHMIDT!
TANK? GREAT STARS, MAN!
IS THAT REALLY YOU?
RESCIND FIRING ORDER! UNLOCK LANDING BAYS--AT ONCE!
BACK AT THE SHACK...
YOU'RE CRAZY, I TELL YA!
AND I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE A ZONE RIDER!
ARMY
YOU CAN'T GO ANYWHERE IN YOUR CONDITION!
I-I'VE GOT TO!
I'VE GOT TO STOP OVERLORD BEFORE HE--
OH YEAH, BIGSHOT? AND JUST HOW DO YOU AIM TO GET OFF THIS MOUNTAIN?


MAYBE YOU'D CARE TO TRY FLAPPIN' YOUR ARMS AND FLYIN' OFF!
YOU MUST HAVE SOME WAY OF GETTING ME OUT OF HERE!
YEAH, OKAY! MATTER OF FACT, I DO!
I GOT A LITTLE CHOPPER--A SOUVENIR OF THAT STRETCH I SERVED IN THE 'NAM!
I PICKED HER UP AS SURPLUS, DIRT CHEAP, WAY BACK IN '92!
SHE'S PRACTICALLY A MUSEUM PIECE!
BUT I HAPPEN TO LOVE THAT LITTLE BIRD! AND I AIN'T LETTIN' A WET-BEHIND-THE-EARS SQUIRT LIKE YOU FLY HER ANYWHERE!
SO YOU BETTER GO GRAB YOUR GEAR!
ARMY
IF MY LITTLE HUEY GOES ANYWHERE, IT'S ME WHO'S GOIN' TO BE DOIN' THE FLYIN'!

A SHORT WHILE LATER, AMID THE SNOW-SWEPT MOUNTAIN PASSES OF THE MIGHTY HIMALAYAS...
THANK HEAVEN FOR SMALL FAVORS!
RIGHT! AT LEAST WE'VE MADE IT TO THIS ONE WITHOUT BEING SPOTTED!
THEY'RE WITHIN RANGE!
BLAST THEM!
HEADS UP! AMBUSH!
IT'S A WHOLE BATTALION OF ZONE TROOPS!
THUM
THUM
TAKE COVER!
FAST!!
THEY'VE GOT US PINNED DOWN!
WE CAN RETREAT SAFELY, BUT THAT WON'T HELP US KNOCK OUT THAT GENERATOR!
13

THEN WE HAD BETTER COME UP WITH SOMETHING BRILLIANT IN A HURRY!
IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, THE WORLD'S RUNNING OUT OF TIME!
MEAN-WHILE, HIGH ABOVE THE SKY-SCRAPERS OF NEW YORK...
IT STILL DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE TO ME, SONNY!
HOW'S COMIN' HERE TO THE BIG APPLE GONNA HELP YOU KNOCK OUT A GIANT SATELLITE HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH?
OVER-LORD MUST BE CONTROLLING THAT SATELLITE FROM SOME-WHERE, OLD-TIMER--
I'M BETTING HE'S DOING IT FROM HIS COMMAND CENTER INSIDE THE CHRYSLER BUILDING!
IT'S DEAD AHEAD!
JUST WHERE DO YOU WANT ME TO LAND?
WE'RE NOT! YOU'RE HEADING HOME--AND I'M BAILING OUT!
WITHOUT NEUTRON ARMOR LIKE MINE, THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD FUNCTION WITH ME INSIDE THE ZONE!
BAIL OUT FROM THIS HEIGHT? WITH YOUR INJURIES?
THAT'S CRAZY!
THE ODDS ARE AGAINST ME! I KNOW THAT!
BESIDES, WHAT MAKES YOU SO SURE YOU CAN EVEN HIT THE CHRYSLER BUILDING?
BUT RIGHT NOW THIS LOOKS LIKE THE BEST SHOT I'VE GOT!

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'LL MAKE IT, SON!
BUT IF THERE'S ONE MAN ON EARTH WHO MIGHT, YOU'RE IT!
AT THAT SAME MOMENT, BACK AT MCC...
IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, TANK! THREE-QUARTERS OF THE EARTH IS ALREADY ZONIFIED!
AND WITH MAX, KAT, AND HIRO PINNED DOWN IN THE HIMALAYAS, THEY'LL NEVER KNOCK OUT THOSE REMAINING ZONE GENERATORS IN TIME!
BETTER GET ME AN IMMEDIATE CLEARANCE FOR TAKEOFF, GENERAL!
WHA-!?
I LEARNED FIRSTHAND WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE ONE OF OVERLORD'S SLAVES--
--AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM DO IT TO ME AGAIN WITHOUT PUTTING UP A DARN GOOD FIGHT!
SHE'S READY, SERGEANT!
GOOD MAN!
NOW OPEN UP THOSE LAUNCH BAYS--AND STAND BACK!
15

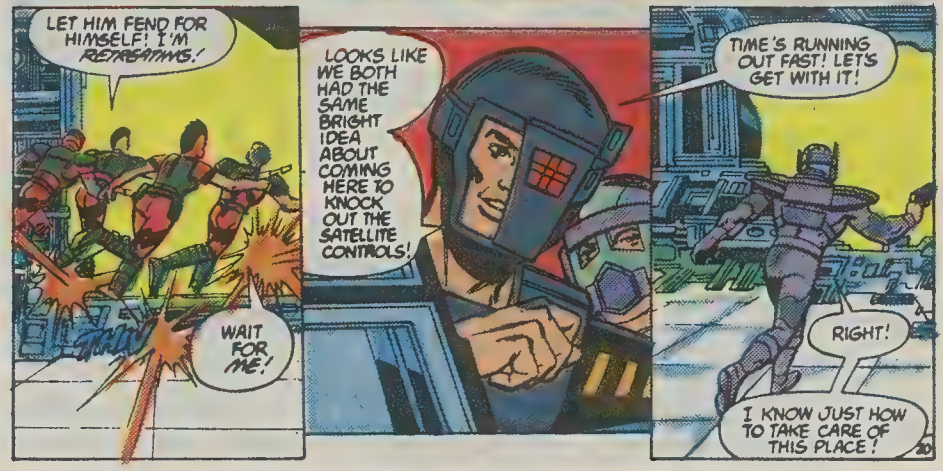
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE: DIRK DEAD, THE OTHERS TRAPPED IN A SHOOTOUT ON A WINDSWEPT MOUNTAIN RANGE HALF A WORLD AWAY!
WHETHER I LIKE IT OR NOT...
... IT'S UP TO ME.
NEW YORK...
BULL'S-EYE ON THE JUMP!
SO FAR, SO GOOD.
BONES STILL (UNNGH) ACHE FROM THAT CRASH I HAD. BUT IF OVER-LORD ENSLAVES THE ENTIRE (UNNGH) HUMAN RACE...
...IT'S NOT GOING TO MATTER MUCH...
...WHAT (UNNGH) HAPPENS TO ME.
I'VE GOT TO BEAT THAT POWER-HUNGRY TYRANT.'
16

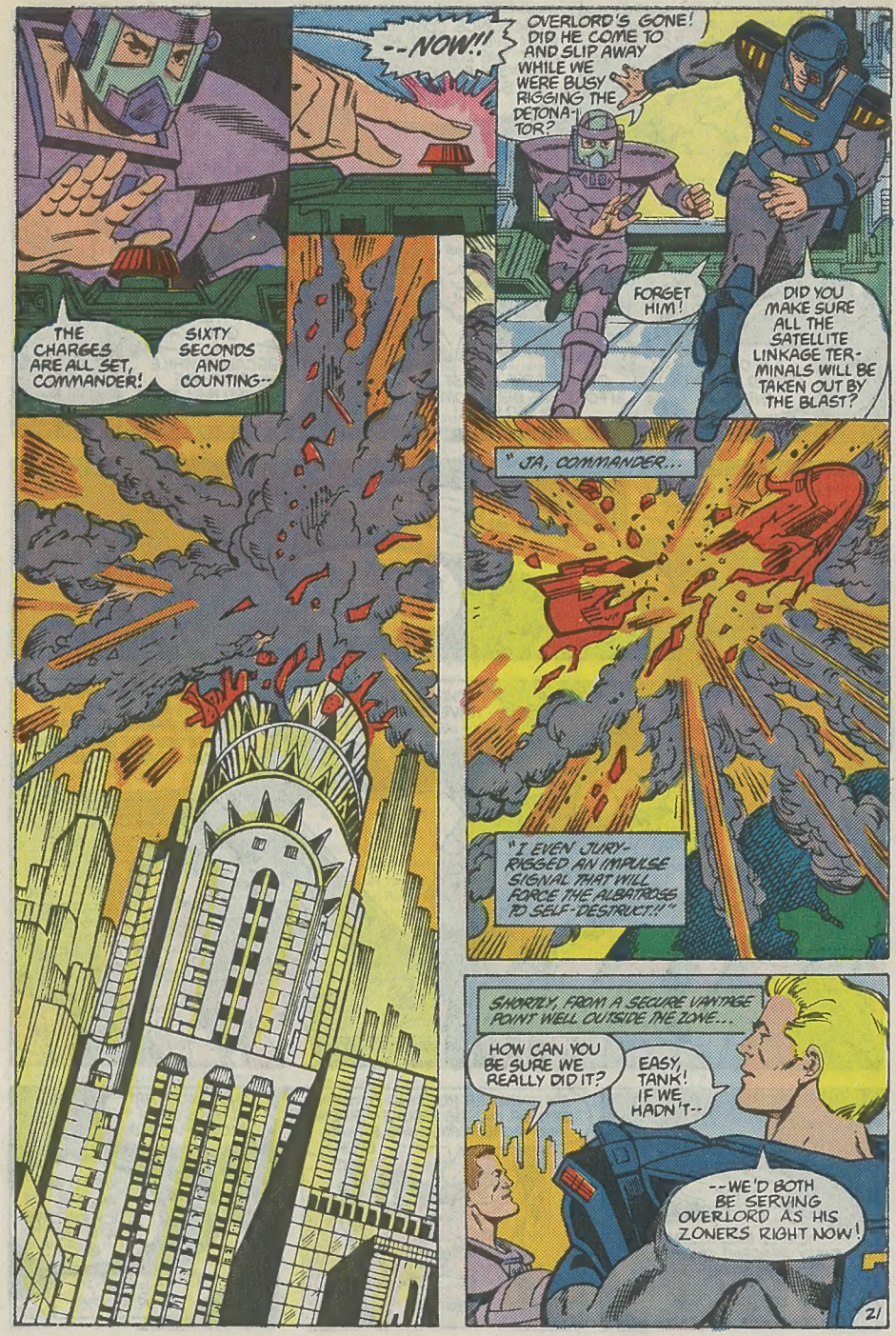
I DON'T THINK EVEN A SUPER-GENIUS LIKE MYSELF COULD'VE SURVIVED THAT CRASH!
IMPOSSIBLE! DIRK COURAGE! HE'S ALIVE--
--AND HE'LL BE BREAKING IN HERE ANY SECOND!
AS MUCH AS I HATE HIM, I'VE GOT TO GIVE HIM CREDIT!
YOUR GAME'S UP, OVER--
UUUUUH...
HE'S WEAK, INJURED...
...IN NO CONDITION TO PUT UP A REAL FIGHT!
HOW GLORIOUS THIS IS!
GOT... GOT TO...
DIRK COURAGE, MY OLD NEMESIS, SO HELPLESS HE'S PRACTICALLY ON HIS KNEES!
SHOULD I ZONE HIM SWIFTLY...
...OR SHOULD I (HEH HEHHH) PLAY WITH HIM A LITTLE BEFORE I MAKE HIM MY LIFELONG SLAVE?
HUH-!?
17

WELL, WELL! THIS IS A PLEASANT SURPRISE! I HADN'T EXPECTED YOU TO RETURN FROM YOUR FAR-FLUNG GENERATOR OUTPOSTS SO SOON!
THERE'S NO NEED TO BE SELFISH, OVERLORD! AFTER ALL...
...WE ALL WANT A CHANCE TO BLAST DIRK COURAGE, TOO!
FIRST SHOT'S MINE!
NO! WE'LL DO WHAT'S FAIR!
NOT UNLESS YOU BEAT ME TO IT!
THIN
THIN
THIN
WE'LL FIRE IN UNISON!
WHEW! SCORE ONE FOR THE GOOD GUYS!
THAT LITTLE SQUABBLE THEY HAD GAVE ME A FEW MOMENTS TO CATCH MY BREATH!
BUT MY TIMING'S WAY OFF! MY STAMINA... GONE!
BLAST!! MISSED!!
NO WAY CAN I KEEP UP THIS CAT-AND-MOUSE GAME FOR LONG!

WITHIN MOMENTS...
FACE IT, COURAGE! YOU'VE HAD IT!
HEH HEHHH! RAZORBACK IS QUITE RIGHT, COMMANDER!
YOU WILL--
WHO IN THE DEVIL--?!?
KARASSSSSH!
HIMMEL!
CAN THAT REALLY BE THE COMMANDER DOWN THERE?
TANK!?
HOPE YOU DON'T MIND MY CRASHING YOUR PARTY WITHOUT AN INVITATION, COMMANDER!
BUT I AM THINKING--
--THERE ARE ENOUGH SWINE IN THIS PIGPEN FOR BOTH OF US!
THERE ARE MORE OF US, FOOL--
19

-- THAN EVEN YOU CAN HANDLE!
HE'S CAUGHT ME FLAT-FOOTED! IF--
AAAAA---!
THWM
YOU GOT THE DROP ON HIM, COMMANDER! THANKS!
NO PROBLEM, TANK! I HAD YOU COVERED!
NOW LET'S SEE HOW WELL THESE SLIME CAN FIGHT WITHOUT THEIR ESTEEMED LEADER TO HELP THEM!
THWM
OVERLORD'S STUNNED! WE-WE'VE GOT TO HELP HIM!


LET HIM FEND FOR HIMSELF! I'M RETREATING!
THWM
WAIT FOR ME!
LOOKS LIKE WE BOTH HAD THE SAME BRIGHT IDEA ABOUT COMING HERE TO KNOCK OUT THE SATELLITE CONTROLS!
TIME'S RUNNING OUT FAST! LET'S GET WITH IT!
RIGHT!
I KNOW JUST HOW TO TAKE CARE OF THIS PLACE!


--NOW!!
OVERLORD'S GONE! DID HE COME TO AND SLIP AWAY WHILE WE WERE BUSY RIGGING THE DETONA-TOR?
FORGET HIM!
DID YOU MAKE SURE ALL THE SATELLITE LINKAGE TER-MINALS WILL BE TAKEN OUT BY THE BLAST?
THE CHARGES ARE ALL SET, COMMANDER!
SIXTY SECONDS AND COUNTING--
"JA, COMMANDER...
"I EVEN JURY-RIGGED AN IMPULSE SIGNAL THAT WILL FORCE THE ALBATROSS TO SELF-DESTRUCT!!"
SHORTLY, FROM A SECURE VANTAGE POINT WELL OUTSIDE THE ZONE...
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE WE REALLY DID IT?
EASY, TANK! IF WE HADN'T--
--WE'D BOTH BE SERVING OVERLORD AS HIS ZONERS RIGHT NOW!

AND SOMETIME LATER, BACK AT MISSION COMMAND CENTRAL...
...SO ONCE COMMUNICATION WITH OVERLORD'S HQ WAS CUT, THE ZONE TROOPS STOPPED FOLLOWING ORDERS! WE BROKE FREE OF BEING PINNED!
I'M DARN PROUD OF YOU, GANG!
OVERLORD'S LATEST EFFORT HAS BEEN COMPLETELY ROLLED BACK!
TRUE, GENERAL! BUT THE WAR GOES ON...
BECAUSE WHILE WE MAY HAVE TRASHED HIS LATEST SCHEME...
"...FULLY HALF THE WORLD STILL REMAINS UNDER OVERLORD'S CONTROL!"
WHAT ARE YOU IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD ABOUT, OVERLORD?
THE ZONE RIDERS HAVE BEATEN US! WE'VE LOST!
WE'VE SUFFERED A MINOR SETBACK! AND THAT'S ALL WE'VE SUFFERED! BECAUSE IN CASE YOU ARE SUFFERING FROM A DRASTIC MEMORY LOSS...
YOU'LL RECALL THAT FIFTY PERCENT OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE STILL REMAINS IN THE NUMBING GRIP OF THE SPIRAL ZONE!
MY CHRYSLER BUILDING COMMAND CENTER WILL BE REBUILT--STRONGER AND MORE IMPREGNABLE THAN EVER!
AND ONCE THAT TASK'S BEEN ACCOMPLISHED...
...OVERLORD AND HIS BLACK WIDOWS WILL BE BACK!
THE END? NOT FOR LONG!
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Today, we are pleased to announce a breakthrough in our fight against the forces of the Spiral Zone. There has been much elation and relief at the top levels of Mission Command Central.

Our research and development team has taken a giant step forward, of sorts. It seems that we have been able to unearth a limited source of Neutron-90, the power source that activates the Zone Riders' suits, protecting them from the ravages of the Spiral Zone.

As stated above, the source is limited. We have been able, therefore, to add to the ranks of the Zone Riders, but we have been able to do so only slowly and with great deliberation and examination of all possible personnel.

We have finally, though, come up with a new group to add to the already heroic and illustrious Zone Riders. We are ecstatic and optimistic about what this will mean in terms of guaranteeing a Free Earth.

Under the command of Dirk Courage, and joining Sgt. Wolfgang Schmidt, First Lieutenant Hiro Taka, Second Lieutenant Max Jones and Corporal Katerina Anastasia, will be the following military personnel:

Second Lieutenant Ned Tucker. Tucker hails originally from Australia. He has a masters degree in physics, and is a top Air Force pilot and demolitions expert.

He gained a reputation early for being a hotshot pilot, expertly outgunning and outflying the experts in the area. He has an almost synergistic understanding of aviation technology, allowing him to outperform previous recorded flights no matter what plane is assigned to him. He just seems to be able to get more out of a plane ... even more than the planes' designers and builders ever expected.

Unfortunately, Tucker was grounded far too early in his career, since he also seemed to have problems with what he saw as an overabundance of regimentation. Sometimes the most high-flying pilots tend to forget the importance of the rules and regulations that got them off the ground in the first place.

Tucker was grounded, our records claim, in order to intimidate him so he would, as his c.o. put it, "straighten up and fly right." He was assigned to Demolition. It was supposed to be an assignment Tucker would find distasteful. Instead, he took to it. He applied the techniques he learned with state-of-the-art technology in order to become the premier expert in his field. Again, a synergistic response to the problem.

When the Zone Riders were first organized, Tucker's expertise would ordinarily have assured him a place on the team. However, at that time, there was only enough Neutron-90 extant for five suits. Tucker had to wait.

First Lieutenant Benjamin Davis Franklin. Franklin has doctorates in chemistry and mathematics, and has been with the U.S. Navy for one year. He became the youngest member of the Zone Riders when Mission Command Central recruited him directly from the Naval Academy. The reason? While still there, Franklin theoretically perfected a way to drain some of the Neutron-90 from the existing Zone Rider suits to create two additional suits. The process did not cause the existing suits to lose a single percentage of effectiveness. Needless to say, as a reward for his fine work, Franklin was given the rank of First Lieutenant, the youngest in the history of the United Nations Defense Forces, and an invitation was extended to him to join the Zone Riders.

This was not the only reason for his appointment, however. Franklin's accomplishments brought him to our attention long before his success with the Zone Rider suits.

To say that Franklin is brilliant is an understatement. He is a wizard at computers, and can often mentally compute an answer faster than Dr. Laurence's most advanced computers can. Tucker's own computer systems are flawless. He is able to implement them with even the sparsest of technology even in the midst of Spiral Zone battles. It is difficult to believe that Franklin is still only eighteen years old.

With these new additions to the team, we are sure that the Spiral Zone will be completely eradicated from the planet in no time.

Overlord's recent defeat at the hands of the Zone Riders proved not to be final. Although he had to abandon his Chrysler Building stronghold, there is every indication that he will return to it.

Intelligence has learned that Overlord has already regrouped his forces. Worse, he has added to the Black Widows' numbers. We have been able to piece together some background concerning these individuals, but as usual, it is sketchy, due to the obviously dubious nature of the people involved.

Intelligence report follows:

Code name: Rawmeat. Real name: Richard Welt.

Overlord discovered this animalistic, ferocious character in Appalachia, while battling the Zone Riders there. Apparently, the Zone Riders crushed his shack with their tanks during the fray. This so, enraged Rawmeat that he decided to repay the Black Widows by fighting them back armed only with his bare hands. Overlord finally managed to knock him out with a stun blast that would have killed a lesser man. Overlord was so impressed by Rawmeat's uncanny, unnatural strength and stamina that he decided to have Rawmeat immunized and become a member of the Black Widows. Rawmeat has taken a place as Overlord's personal enforcer.

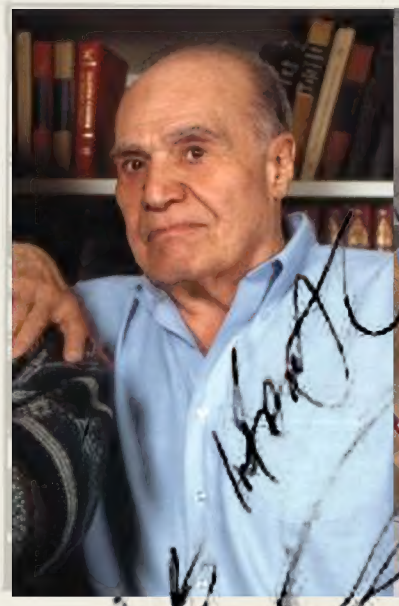
Rawmeat's animalistic intelligence—resembling a beast's instinct—is used to track and hunt down adversaries, like a deadly predator.

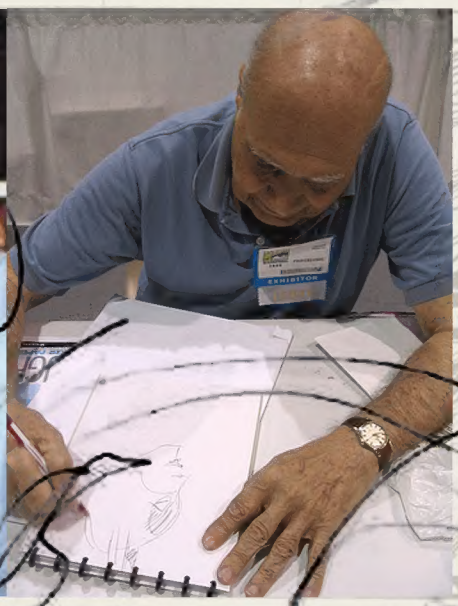
Code name: Crook. Real name: Jean Duprey.

Duprey is known to us. We have records of his military career, forwarded from Interpol and the French Air Force, where he began his military life. He later switched to the French Army. He was arrested and charged for numerous war crimes in the Desert Wars. He fled, and went into hiding somewhere in South America. In absentia, however, he was tried, convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

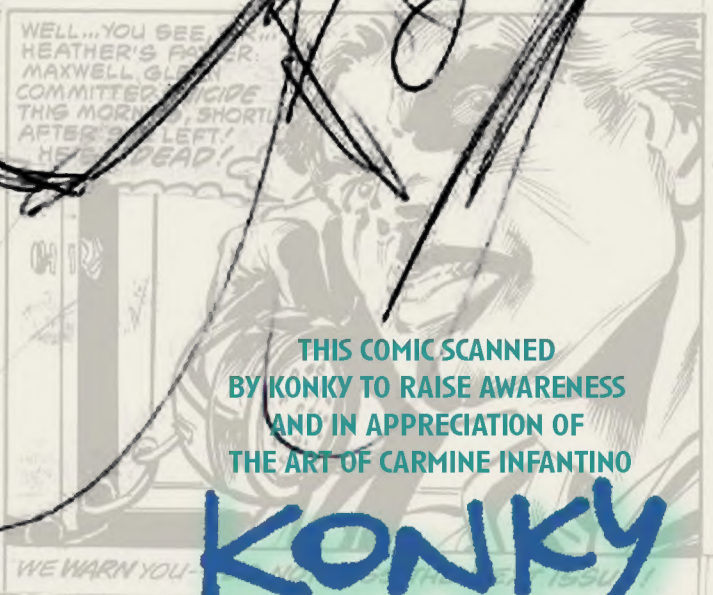
It was in South America that Overlord first encountered Crook. At that time, Overlord was trying to Zone an area on that continent where Crook had set up a lab. There is no telling what Crook had meant this lab to be used for, since, with his degrees in physiology, aeronautics and engineering, he is capable of practically anything. Even without using these skills, Crook was up to no good. He had already corrupted the local governments, manipulating the officials there. It wasn't until the Zone Riders arrived that Crook's operation was shown to be the scandal it was. Despite (or because of) this, Crook's reputation preceded him in Overlord's eyes. The leader of the Black Widows soon enlisted Crook to joining his band, immunizing him and fighting alongside him on many missions.

There will be many of these missions to come. The Black Widows will return, and when they do, they will be stronger than ever.





"UH, HEATHER GLENN ISN'T HERE
THE MOMENT! THIS IS MATT MURDOC
"OH! I'VE HEARD OF YO MR. MURDOCK YOU'RE MS. GLENN'S ATTORNEY I--I GUESS I CAN TELL YOU..."
"TELL ME WHAT?"



THIS COMIC SCANNED
BY KONKY TO RAISE AWARENESS
AND IN APPRECIATION OF
THE ART OF CARMINE INFANTINO

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